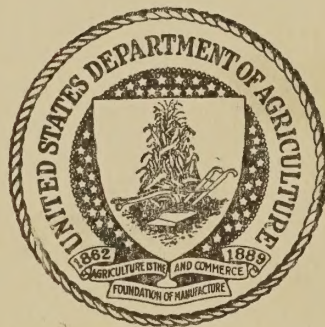


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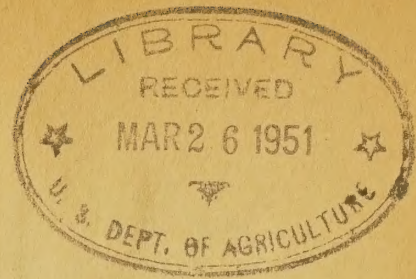
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Rural Electrification Administration  
Washington 25, D. C.



February 5, 1951

To : All Field Representatives  
Applications and Loans Division

From : G. E. Dillon, Assistant Chief  
Applications and Loans Division

Subject: Suggestions for Helping Borrowers With Their  
Power Use and Member Education Programs

We are glad to transmit the attached suggestions covering the various phases of the power use and member education program. It is being sent to you for your guidance and is not intended for distribution to or direct use by borrowers.

To avoid confusion as you read these suggestions, I call your attention to the following:

1. The suggestions are not so comprehensive that they cover all situations or all possible approaches to specific situations.
2. Techniques and methods of conducting programs, as such, are not presented and discussed. Reference to them is only incidental to the suggestions on the broader and more general aspects of the program.
3. This document is an outgrowth of discussions by the A & L Division at the June, 1950 staff conferences. It is the result of a great deal of work by both the headquarters and field staff. To the greatest practical extent, preference has been given to preserving the language used by the field representatives in their comments over thoroughly logical arrangement and consistency of composition and expression.

I respectfully urge that you familiarize yourselves with these suggestions so that you may make the most effective use of them.

Attachment

*G. E. Dillon*

(Admin. Only)







ACCEPTANCE OF POWER USE AND MEMBER EDUCATION PROGRAM

1. How can the objectives of a power use and member education program be presented so that it will be accepted and understood by directors and managers? (What can be done to win acceptance of the program?)
  - a. Person presenting program being able, well informed, and believer in program. (Field representatives making full use of REA printed material.)
  - b. Orientation conferences attended by directors and managers; include talks by and questions directed to representatives of co-ops with successful program.
  - c. More work by REA field representatives with directors.
    - (1) Work with individual directors prior to board meetings.
    - (2) Meet with boards of directors to discuss merits of program.
    - (3) Stress obligations of cooperative to its members as a service organization.
    - (4) Cite success of other cooperatives with program.
    - (5) Show how electrification adviser can assist with specific problems, such as large percent of minimum users, poor annual meetings, bad public relations. (Let directors pick out specific problems on their own cooperative.)
    - (6) Point out dangers of an uninformed membership.
    - (7) Cite examples of cooperatives with poor public relations.
    - (8) Indicate acceptance of program by NRECA, Statewides, and use of similar programs by commercial power companies.
    - (9) Invite board's reaction or suggestions, following presentation.
    - (10) Make full use of visual aids.
    - (11) Point out responsibilities of directors under Rural Electrification Act and usually reflected in cooperatives' by-laws.
  - d. Have board and other members visit systems with successful programs.
  - e. Have all REA representatives well informed and supporting power use and member education program.
  - f. At statewide meetings, assign conference time for cooperative directors and managers with state power use and member education committee and REA Power Use Specialists.



- g. Have programs on power use at regional and statewide meetings with exhibits, demonstrations, charts, etc.
- h. Provide field representatives with an analysis of the present and future financial position of each cooperative. (Use of debt service charts and explanation of second sheet of feasibility study.)
- i. Use program to offset "opposition" propaganda through publicity media, radio, press, and other.
- j. Publicize and encourage through statewide newspapers.
- k. Show that work load of manager does not allow sufficient time for carrying out the details of this specialized activity.

2. What is the responsibility of the state power use and member education committee in showing other agencies the importance of this program and in securing their help and cooperation?
- a. State Committee to hold conferences with other agencies to discuss the scope of a power use and member education program and to coordinate it with their programs. Request their assistance and offer to assist them.
  - b. Work through State and County USDA Councils to assure an informed agricultural leadership.
  - c. Invite representatives of other agencies to attend and participate in all meetings.
  - d. Have representatives of other agencies participate in the orientation conferences and EA schools and meetings.
  - e. Stress better rural living as a result of a power use and member education program.
  - f. Encourage rural electric cooperatives to work with local groups.
  - g. Publicize the power use and member education program and its relations to programs of other agencies.
  - h. Emphasize the educational nature of the program.
  - i. Point out how program can increase rural income.
  - j. Show where program can strengthen National position in time of emergency.



3. How can an electrification adviser get support and cooperation from the other cooperative employees?
  - a. Have full support of manager and board.
  - b. Prepare other employees in advance for the program.
  - c. Have manager lead group discussion of problems noted by other employees and on which EA might work for better operation of cooperative.
  - d. Have EA work during orientation period with section heads of the cooperative to learn about its organization and the activities of the other employees.
  - e. Have other employees of the cooperative aid EA with some activities to familiarize them with her or his work.
  - f. If cooperative has regular staff meetings, have EA report on work and results accomplished, and discuss new problems noted by other employees.
  - g. Encourage cooperative employee training meetings.
  - h. Use news stories to build up importance of the EA's work.
  - i. Show that strong cooperative provides better job security.
  - j. Prepare and distribute among employees clearly stated job descriptions with organizational chart.
  - k. Act as other employees and work to win their confidence, friendship and support.
4. How can the cooperative gain the cooperation and support of the Agricultural Extension Service, Vocational Education, Farm and Home Administration, and other organizations?
  - a. Have a qualified EA who can command their respect and give technical assistance in rural electrification.
  - b. Have the cooperative officials and employees acquaint themselves with other agricultural programs.
  - c. Offer to aid and not interfere with other agencies in their programs.



- d. Invite representatives of these agencies to attend and participate in annual meetings of the cooperative. Be appreciative, and express it, of assistance received from other agencies.
- e. Publicize other agencies' activities, and their leaders, in newsletters.
- f. Recognize their rightful position in the rural community.
- g. Obtain their advice in developing an educational program.
- h. Have representative agency leaders serve on advisory committee of cooperative.
- i. Arrange an honor ceremony and recognize those helping in early development of cooperative.
- j. Acquaint other organizations, and public generally, with the cooperative's program.
- k. Hold meetings of State and County USDA Councils periodically in the cooperative's office.
- l. Invite editors, extension workers and others to prepare articles for cooperative newsletters.



ORGANIZATION OF POWER USE AND MEMBER EDUCATION PROGRAM

1. How can a power use and member education program be organized for best results?
  - a. Understanding and whole-hearted acceptance by board of directors and manager.
  - b. Selection of an interested, able committee. (Study carefully "Organization of an Educational Program for Members on Electric Use and Cooperation," available from REA.)
  - c. Encouragement, assistance and guidance of REA with emphasis on development of the co-op's own ideas and ideas developed by other co-ops.
  - d. Inclusion in the organizational plans for the employment of a capable and qualified electrification adviser.
  - e. Exercise of the initiative and the interest of:
    - (1) Board of directors
    - (2) Manager
    - (3) Committee
    - (4) Representative members.
  - f. A planned, well balanced program with proper follow-through.
  - g. Cooperative endorsing and supporting the training schools for EA's.
  - h. As summed up by one REA Field Representative, "Initiated by Board of Directors, stimulated by the Manager, conducted by the Electrification Adviser with participation by all employees, supplemented by inter-related agencies and local business concerns."
2. How can the cooperatives organize successful power use and member education programs?
  - a. Follow suggestions of power use and member education committee and representative local people in organizing program.
  - b. Evaluate needs of members, determine general public attitude.
  - c. Give advice and assistance and utilize all practical methods of publicity.
  - d. Maintain proper balance--public relations, member relations and education, and power use education.



3. What is the relationship of the cooperative's educational committee to the board of directors?
  - a. Acts as planning committee for board of directors.
  - b. Informs and advises board of directors. (Committee includes directors.)
  - c. Helps to carry out program of board of directors.
4. How can the electrification adviser and the cooperative's educational committee work together?
  - a. Work as team and captain in organizing, planning, executing and evaluating a program.
  - b. EA follow through on committee recommendations.
  - c. Plan and work together in members' meetings. (Include manager.)
  - d. EA report to and keep committee informed.
5. What are the functions of the neighborhood, advisory and other committees?
  - a. To determine members' needs, including public relations, and outline program to meet these.
  - b. To keep informed concerning local needs, either as new ones develop or old ones are recognized.
  - c. To arrange, sponsor and publicize meetings.
  - d. To cooperate and assist in carrying out activities. (See "Organization of Educational Program for Members on Electric Use and Cooperative," available from REA.)
  - e. To be informed concerning other cooperatives and their activities.
  - f. To help promote good public relations.



PLANNING A POWER USE AND MEMBER EDUCATION PROGRAM  
(See first two chapters "Telling The Co-op Story")

1. How do you plan a good program?
  - a. Learn basic facts about the community and the co-op.
  - b. Outline scope of program.
  - c. Give proper consideration to all phases of a well balanced educational program.
  - d. Locate community leaders and accepted meeting places.
  - e. Use member assistance in planning a program of action, arranged according to seasonal activities and directed towards their needs.
  - f. Get assistance from educational, commercial, farm, church and civic leaders.
  - g. Select effective methods for disseminating information.
  - h. Secure member participation in every possible way.
  - i. Recognize abilities and capabilities of Electrification Adviser.
2. How can needs of members be determined?
  - a. Compile and analyze basic agricultural data.
  - b. Consultations with County and Home Agents, educational representatives, and other rural leaders.
  - c. Surveys of electrical appliances owned and planned for purchase by members, including services provided by dealers.
  - d. Reports from meetings of neighborhood and other committees.
  - e. Solicit suggestions in newsletters.
  - f. Individual requests of members.
  - g. Interviews and conferences with members by co-op employees.



3. What are the essential qualifications of an electrification adviser?
- a. Sympathy with the rural electrification program.
  - b. A basic understanding of what a co-op is and how it works.
  - c. Belief in the cooperative way of doing business as a means of improving the living standards of people.
  - d. An understanding of farm life and of how electricity can contribute to better farming and to better farm living.
  - e. Ability to gain and maintain the professional respect and cooperation of educators (school teachers and principals, technical instructors, Extension Service workers) and of other professional workers (such as health officials) serving rural people.
  - f. Ability to work with rural people and to enlist their cooperation.
  - g. Willingness and ability to get authentic and up-to-date information needed in the member education job.
  - h. Ability to:
    - (1) Speak effectively before a group of people.
    - (2) Write simply, clearly and correctly.
    - (3) Organize and conduct group meetings.
    - (4) Plan and conduct an effective demonstration.
    - (5) Recognize, develop, and make use of neighborhood and community leadership.

4. Where can qualified electrification advisers be found?
- a. Among home economic or agriculture trained employees of cooperatives, and other organizations.
  - b. Graduating classes, placement services of colleges and universities.
  - c. Among extension service agents and high school homemaking and agriculture teachers.
  - d. Employment bureau and placement services of professional groups.
  - e. Other rural electric cooperatives.
  - f. By training and developing "on the job" or "in-service."



5. Should an electrification adviser have two positions in the co-op?
  - a. Only on very small cooperatives.
  - b. Wherever practicable should be a full-time job. Quoting one REA Field Representative, "In my limited experience, those who are serving in a dual capacity are doing very poorly in both jobs."
6. How can electrification adviser schools be made more effective?
  - a. Have two years' advance general planning and one year advance detailed planning of subjects and dates of schools by state power use and member education committee
  - b. Coordinate schools within a region and among regions.
  - c. Encourage more work participation and group discussion by electrification advisers with few lectures.
  - d. Make more use of state college and extension specialists.
  - e. Use the services of technical specialists of distributors and manufacturing companies to discuss the construction, operation and care of electrical equipment.
  - f. Use more visual aids and work sessions.
  - g. Present technical detailed information in a practical way that will apply to actual problems.
  - h. Arrange forum exchanges among electrification advisers of successful methods employed.
  - i. Give more attention to methods and techniques of passing on technical subject matter to members.
  - j. Solicit views of qualified electrification advisers and others on how to improve schools.
  - k. Select carefully the persons to appear on programs. As one REA Field Representative stated, "Be sure that those who appear on the program can get along with people in the State, know the meaning of public relations, are tolerant, have a sincere desire to assist the people instead of an arrogant critical attitude."



EXECUTION OF POWER USE AND MEMBER EDUCATION PROGRAM

1. How can you assure good execution, or administration, of a power use and member education program?
  - a. Get understanding of program by directors, manager and other cooperative employees.
  - b. Make effective use of agricultural leaders and committees.
  - c. Report progress periodically and regularly to board of directors.
  - d. Obtain support and advice of all other agencies and organizations.
  - e. Employ a competent electrification adviser full-time for the program.
  - f. Assign specific responsibilities to various individuals--co-op personnel, committee members, directors, managers, etc.
  - g. Use regular assistance and guidance from REA field representatives.
  - h. Use effective techniques.
  - i. Organize to stimulate and win member participation.
  - j. Have good training schools for electrification advisers.
  - k. Provide adequate equipment to do the job.
  - l. Set goals and check results.
  - m. Keep program within limits of personnel and facilities.
  - n. Work with other co-ops and farm organizations in the area.
2. How can an electrification adviser reach those members, who usually need help, but who seldom attend meetings or demonstrations? (Who are not interested in helping themselves or in receiving help from others.)
  - a. Reach this group through others. (Indirectly through neighbors.)
  - b. Do personal work with individual members.
  - c. Ascertain common interest - individually.
  - d. Practice persistence and patience.
  - e. Work through their children.



- f. Use lineman and other cooperative employees.
- g. Give them a job to do.
- h. Get the assistance of other agencies and of community leaders.
- i. Show personal interest in individual members.
- j. Use radio, newsletters and special mailings.

3. How can electrification advisers get cooperation and assistance from dealers and distributors?

- a. Hold dealers' meetings, offering them cooperation.
- b. Arrange exhibits and displays on rotational basis in headquarters and branch offices.
- c. Provide free or partial installation as a promotional use feature.
- d. Give them special assistance.
- e. Use Section 5 Loans where needed.
- f. Inform them of the cooperative's plans to serve members, stressing the appliance sales possibilities.
- g. Acquaint them with the cooperative's rates.
- h. Treat everyone alike.

4. What salaries should electrification advisers be paid?

- a. Enough to attract people possessed of the abilities which this job requires; enough to hold them and maintain their enthusiasm and devotion.
- b. Affected by cooperative's size - members and miles, and financial status.
- c. Properly related to manager's salary.
- d. Based upon training and experience of EA.



- e. In line with salaries of other supervisory employees of the cooperative and other educational workers in the area.
- f. Sufficient to permit the employee and his family to live the good life in a community.



EVALUATING POWER USE AND MEMBER EDUCATION PROGRAM

1. What indications can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the power use and member education program?
  - a. Attendance of members at annual meeting and participation by them therein.
  - b. Increased attendance and participation in all cooperative's meetings and activities.
  - c. KWH consumption increase by members.
  - d. Decrease in minimum bill users and idle services.
  - e. Decrease in members' complaints.
  - f. Increase in requests by the members for assistance of the electrification adviser.
  - g. Use of services of EA by educational leaders in area.
  - h. Favorable comments on power use and member education program--solicited or otherwise.
  - i. Improved public relations and community acceptance of program.
  - j. Review and study of EA's reports.
  - k. Better distribution of power usage over each 24-hour period.
  - l. Degree of cooperation of electric appliance dealers and distributors.
  - m. Absence of lawsuits or threats of litigation.



## GENERAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. How can a small cooperative conduct an effective power use and member education program?
  - a. Work closely with established local educational workers.  
(Extension service workers and vocational-education teachers.)
  - b. Use movies, posters, exhibits, and other visual aids wisely.
  - c. Use newsletters.
  - d. Get group discussion of cooperative problems.
  - e. Hire local home economics and agriculture teachers in summer.
  - f. Have cooperative employee trained for special activities.
  - g. Inform and make use of all employees.
  - h. Make use of qualified commercial specialists.
  - i. Inform and enlist directors to work individually.
  - j. Organize and use voluntary committees.
  - k. Employ a qualified worker.
  - l. Give co-op by-laws to all members.
  - m. Give members REA publications such as "A Guide for Members" and power use leaflets.
2. What can be done to encourage universities to offer additional courses in rural electrification?
  - a. Have statewide power use and member education committee discuss with college officials duties of electrification adviser and required training, and urge more electives and short courses in rural electrification. (Perhaps offer financial aid in conducting short courses.)
  - b. Tell college and university officials about employment opportunities for graduates as Electrification Advisers.



- c. Supply them with job descriptions of openings in rural electric cooperatives.
- d. Have college officials, extension leaders, and other educational leaders participate in statewide meetings and EA training schools.
- e. Establish scholarships in this specialized field.
- f. Discuss with proper university officials deficiencies in courses taken by recent graduates in agricultural engineering and home economics as related to the work of an EA.

3. What technical training should electrification advisers have?

- a. College training, preferably in agricultural engineering or home economics.
- b. Special training and experience in electrical equipment operation and cooperative principles. Also, in journalism, public speaking, teaching methods, radio, other publicity techniques and demonstrations. (Field experience desirable.)
- c. Enough to provide the type of services needed by farm people.

4. How can the regional agricultural engineer and regional home economist assist in the program:

- a. Assist in coordinating programs of individual cooperatives in the state and in the region.
- b. Meet with boards to obtain acceptance of program.
- c. Furnish technical assistance on selected activities.
- d. Assist in obtaining qualified electrification advisers.
- e. Work directly with state power use and member education Committee in planning and conducting EA training schools, collaborating with other agencies and statewides. (Special responsibility to assure necessary equipment and aids needed in schools.)
- f. Work with educational leaders in their respective fields to promote program.
- g. Help EA in organizing programs for individual cooperatives and in holding sufficient "Live Demonstrations" to encourage him to conduct such demonstrations.



- h. Give individual help to cooperatives having financial or member relations difficulties.
  - i. Understand each other's job.
  - j. Cooperate and promote the program to achieve the same goal.
5. How can other Applications and Loans field representatives assist with this program?
- a. Thoroughly understand the objectives of the program and how it functions.
  - b. Encourage boards to adopt member and power use education program and hire electrification advisers.
  - c. Be furnished with all possible working tools from Washington.
  - d. Work closely with regional agricultural engineer and home economist in obtaining and selecting EA's.
  - e. Assist regional agricultural engineer and home economist on problems within their specialized fields.
  - f. Help cooperatives in establishing wiring, lighting and youth programs or any other programs which are well-planned and for which they have had adequate training.
  - g. Assist EA's in any way they are able and qualified, including ordinarily a personal conference on each visit.
6. How can the other divisions of REA assist with this program?
- a. Thoroughly understand its objectives, organization and procedures.
  - b. Endorse and assist in obtaining acceptance as opportunity affords.
  - c. Avoid making comments and remarks which may be interpreted as unfavorable to the program.
  - d. Have their field representatives cooperate with A & L field representatives to the extent that we all tell the same story and do not confuse the co-ops.



- e. Can help most where there is no EA by continuously calling attention to the fact that an adequate educational program is necessary and the dangers that lie in an uninformed membership. Where an electrification adviser is on the job other divisions can help by recommending that he devote full time to it.
- f. Promote the program whenever and wherever possible. Use a positive, rather than a negative approach, when the program is discussed. Be thoroughly familiar with the program and know its importance. Know the duties of an electrification adviser and discourage managers from using these employees for the work other than that for which they were employed.



